



# WSCC Firewise Programmatic Guidelines

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May 10, 2016

## Program Background:

Increasing frequency and severity of wildfires in Washington State, increasing populations in rural and suburban areas, and drought, make it vitally important that private landowners be prepared for wildfire. The Firewise program is an educational program providing important information for private landowners and communities about actions they can take to prepare for and prevent damage from wildfire.

Historically conservation districts have been an important local provider of Firewise program information to landowners/homeowners as well as assistance to implement Firewise recommended practices and fuels reduction. In previous years funding for this work has been provided to conservation districts through DNR. In the 2016 legislative session the WSCC was provided \$1,000,000 for conservation districts to implement Firewise program activities. Funding is for the current 2015-17 biennium only with no guarantee for future funding.

These guidelines detail rules for the WSCC Firewise program, describe the cost share policy, funding criteria, reporting, and the vouchering process requirements.

## Program Rules:

- Funds will be allocated all at once and as soon as possible. However, if funds are turned back, additional allocations may be made at a later date. Districts shall complete a project proposal form (to be built in Formstack) in order to apply for funds. A deadline for project proposals to be submitted to the Commission will be established and will be no fewer than 15 business days from the time notice is provided to conservation districts that the window has opened to submit proposals.
- All work including cost share projects must be complete by June 30, 2017.
- This program utilizes operating funds appropriated directly to the Commission by the legislature specifically for conservation districts to implement Firewise.

- Districts may apply for funds individually or in groups. Districts are limited to participation in one proposal.
- Funding is limited to \$50,000 per proposal regardless if a proposal includes one district or multiple districts.
- Proposals may include: all Firewise recommended practices, cost-share with landowners for fuels reduction work, installing signage for homes and evacuation routes, conducting homeowner/landowner Firewise risk assessments, assisting landowners/communities with implementing recommendations based on Firewise assessments, outreach and education to landowners within current or potentially new Firewise communities, mentoring neighboring districts with capacity building for existing staff/outreach assistance/on the ground projects implementation.

### Cost Share Policy:

- The maximum cost share per landowner per fiscal year is \$50,000.
- Cost share projects must be entered into CPDS (similar to cost share projects funded under an implementation grant) and cost share contracts must be printed from the CPDS system.
- All cost share projects must adhere to the Commission's policy on cultural resources located here: <http://scc.wa.gov/cultural-resources-2/>. [Exemptions](#) may exist for projects that are not ground-disturbing.
- Cultural resource costs are awarded on a case by case basis in addition to the initial proposal funding.

### Funding Criteria:

- Projects should be located in high priority areas identified in [Community Wildfire Protection Plans](#) or in high risk areas identified in conjunction with local stakeholders (regional DNR staff, local fire districts, etc...).
  - Districts may refer to a county hazard mitigation plan that indicates implementing Firewise is a priority for their county.
  - Districts may also refer to long-range and annual work plans that identify Firewise as a priority.
- Project proposals should include on-the-ground work implementing Firewise recommended practices and fuels reduction. Chipping biomass for fuels reduction is encouraged to reduce local concerns about air quality from burning.
- Outreach and education efforts should focus on: recognition of new Firewise communities, continuing recognition of existing Firewise communities, and growing participation of individual landowners within existing Firewise communities.
- Districts are highly encouraged to leverage funds and other resources with local entities/agencies.

- Districts are highly encouraged to partner with local stakeholders and regional DNR staff.
- Districts are encouraged to work together and mentor each other to build local and regional capacity to educate and assist landowners through Firewise.

### Reporting:

- Districts must describe in project proposals how the district will track measureable accomplishments under this program such as: acres treated, number of landowners assisted, number and names of new Firewise communities, number and names of re-recognized Firewise communities, number of Firewise risk assessments completed, growth of participation in existing Firewise communities, and chipper-hours provided to landowners/communities.
- Each district allocated funds must provide a descriptive report with measurable accomplishments such as those listed above no later than July 31, 2017. A format/template for this report will be provided by the Commission.

### Vouchering Process:

- Monthly grant vouchers are required.
- Refer to the Grants and Contract Procedures Manual for more detailed information about vouchering <http://scc.wa.gov/grants-and-finance/gp-manuals/>.